



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
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CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION
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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Attorney General Darrell McGraw Accuses Healthy Inspirations Owner, Brian Griffith, Of "Running" From His Obligations

Attorney General Darrell McGraw recently filed suit in Berkeley County Circuit Court alleging that Brian Griffith, owner of the Healthy Inspirations weight loss club, is "running" from his obligations to the State of West Virginia. A hearing is scheduled for August 11, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. before Judge David Sanders at the Berkeley County Courthouse in Martinsburg to determine whether the State should be granted a judgment against Griffith for defaulting on the settlement agreement he signed with McGraw's office.

Last year, Griffith, of Woodstock, Virginia, agreed to reform the business practices of his Healthy Inspirations weight loss centers in Charles Town and Martinsburg in response to Attorney General McGraw's investigation. Griffith also agreed to make full refunds to eight consumers whom McGraw's office alleged had been misled by Griffith.

Griffith defaulted on the agreement after paying only \$550 and currently owes approximately \$5,900 to the State. Griffith also closed both West Virginia locations, leaving unfulfilled obligations to other West Virginia consumers who paid in advance for purchases of Healthy Inspirations memberships.

McGraw's office began investigating Griffith in 2004 after learning that Healthy Inspirations published notices that it was "conducting a child obesity study and seminar" and invited Eastern Panhandle area consumers to attend a program at the Clarion Hotel in Shepardstown. Griffith promised, "Qualified kids will be selected to participate in a free eight week program." In fact, persons who attended the program were subjected to a high-pressure sales presentation to buy expensive memberships in Griffith's private weight loss club.

The subsequent investigation also disclosed that Healthy Inspirations was violating a wide range of West Virginia consumer protection laws, including failing to furnish consumers with proper notice of their three-day right to cancel and charging consumers unlawful collection fees, attorney's fees, and additional charges if they failed to make payments by electronic funds transfer.

Any persons wishing to file a complaint about a consumer matter or to alert the Attorney General about unfair or deceptive practices may do so by calling the Consumer Protection Hot Line, 1-800-368-8808. To download and print a complaint form, please click on the General Complaint form link at the top of this page.

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